

EXPLORATORY HOME MAKING IN THE JUNIOR
HIGH SCHOOLS OF ILLINOIS

A Paper

Presented to

William Zeigel, Ph.D.

Eastern Illinois State College

*approved
July 8, 1954
Wm H. Zeigel*

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirement for the Degree
Master of Science in Education

By

Frances Rousch Guy, B.Ed.

August 1954

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CHAPTER 1

THE PROBLEM AND EXPLANATION OF TERMS USED

The early statement that the junior high school is an institution which provides an educational program that is well suited to the needs of youth during early adolescence is not satisfactory today.

C. H. Johnston in his book "Junior High School Administration" describes the junior high school as the one we have come to associate with the new ideas of promotion, new methods of preventing elimination, new devices for moving selected groups through subject-matter at different rates, higher compulsory school age, new and thorough analysis of pupil populations, enriched courses, varied and partially differentiated curriculum offerings, scientifically directed study practice, new schemes for all sorts of educational guidance, new psychological characterizations of types in approaching the paramount school problem of individual differences, new school year, new school day, new kind of class exercise, new kinds of laboratory and library equipment and utilization, and new kinds of intimate community service.¹

Today the junior high school, in its various forms, has become a fixed part of hundreds of city, county, and state school systems throughout the nation. The junior high school

¹ C. H. Johnston, *Junior High School Administration*, Cleveland, 1920, p. 176.

has proved its worth. It has proved that many of the earlier criticisms leveled at it are unjustified.²

The junior high school curriculum should meet the needs of both the pupil who will not continue after junior high school, the pupil who will not continue long in high school, and the pupil who will continue in high school and perhaps go on to college. The major aim of the junior high school program was the development of a way to ascertain and to provide for individual interests and aptitudes. As a means of doing this exploratory courses were organized.³

²

Ibid. p. 125

Ibid. p. 131

A. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. The purpose of this study was to analyze: (1) the history and origin of the junior high (2) the origin and content of the exploratory courses and (3) the exploratory courses in homemaking.

Importance of the study. It is important that everyone teaching exploratory courses have a knowledge of their origin and their function in the curriculum.

All pupils do not develop alike but as individuals, therefore, there is a need of adapting the exploratory courses to provide for individual interests and aptitudes.

B. EXPLANATION OF TERMS USED

Exploratory Courses are those which provide for individual interests and aptitudes. Exploratory contacts should bring to pupils an understanding and appreciation of the rich and varied programs of training ahead and a true conception of the occupational activities outside of the school. Such courses may be thought of as "experimental, tryout, or first hand experience." The reason for the term exploratory being used more frequently at the junior high level is that it has been far more economical to experiment with a child at the age of ten to twelve than at the age of sixteen. These courses must be well coordinated with the whole program to be successful. Exploration may be exploring

within the academic courses, exploring general studies, or as specialized courses. Exploratory studies illuminate and enrich the general studies but they also have legitimate functions to serve in their own right. Any exploratory experience which may be an outgrowth of a study will add to its value. Exploratory courses often lead a pupil into a vocation and into a field that develops into a career in many cases.

Enrichment consists of adding to the program or courses valuable material and experiences. This may be done in a variety of ways. One way would be the introduction of the concrete experiences of students, and other ways would be through home projects, home experiences, on-the-job training, and closely related subjects added which would be a means of broadening the knowledge and experience of the pupils.

Tryout is an important phase of training for occupational competency and the experience which effects the transition between school and work. Even a very small amount of work in an occupation may result in a more realistic view of it than can be gained from books and lectures. First hand work experiences help pupil to appraise his own capacities, interests and preferences; to survey the needs and opportunities for employment; to gain first hand experience after the accumulation of knowledge; to familiarize with the realities of actual working situations; give school information which will enable it to make instruction more practical; provide a richer meaning to

pupil prospecting in the same vocation, and local contacts offers enthusiasm and zeal for further effort and study--creates pupil satisfaction.⁵ The term tryout was used many times in the discussion of exploratory courses for junior high and that is the reason for its definition here because it does not have the same meaning when used at junior high level and on the secondary level. The case where a girl might put into practice what she has learned would be putting into practice in an office what she learned in bookkeeping, and typing. In homemaking, a unit on "Fun With the Family" would be a part of her everyday living. If it were not for the age element here, the tryout experience would be a valuable part of the seventh and eighth grade training. Tryout is most generally associated with the vocational field or the business field through diversified occupations, office occupations, high school homemaking, and could also be in agriculture and industrial arts.

C. ORGANIZATION OF THE REPORT

Chapter III reviews the survey made from the seventh and eighth grade exploratory homemaking courses in some of the schools in Illinois and a second survey reviews the opinions and suggestions of former junior high school pupils who are now freshmen in the Matteson High School. Chapter IV gives the summary, conclusions, and recommendations; the bibliography concludes the report.

CHAPTER II

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE JUNIOR HIGH

A. HISTORY

Committees and their accomplishments. Before 1900 two committees made recommendations that had a bearing on the reorganization movement and on the introduction of the junior high school.

In 1892 the Committee of 10, appointed by the National Council of Education of the National Education Association made recommendations that several subjects such as algebra, geometry, natural science, and foreign language should begin two years earlier--leaving six years instead of eight for the elementary school period.⁶

Three years later, in 1895, after the Committee of 10 made their recommendations, a Committee of 15, appointed by the Department of Superintendence, recommended a more gradual transition be made from elementary to secondary school studies by introducing algebra and Latin into the seventh and eighth grades.⁷

⁶ "N.E.A. Report--"Committee of 10"--Sec. School Studies, (American Book Co. 1894), p. 249

⁷ "N.E.A. Report--"Addresses and Proceedings"--Sec. School Studies, (American Book Co. 1895), p. 320

The Standing Committee on Six Year Courses, appointed in 1905 by the Department of Secondary Education of NEA had a significant influence in shaping the functions and characteristic features of the junior high after 1910.⁸

Another Committee on Economy of Time appointed by NEA in 1907 made significant suggestions for the modification of the instructional program of the junior high.⁹

In 1913, the Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education provided an excellent source of suggestions for educators responsible for developing the program in junior high.¹⁰

Thorndike (1907), Ayres (1909) and Strayer (1911) made studies and found that most children continued school to the end of the fifth grade and then between the fifth and the first year of high school, 60 to 67% dropped out. The outcome of these studies emphasized the need of modifying the Educational program in order to retain a larger percentage of children in school. It was because of these studies that "retention of pupils in school" was emphasized as one of the major purposes of junior high schools.¹¹

Due to crowded building conditions in upper elementary

8

Ibid. 1907, p. 705-710

9

Ibid. 1908, p. 625-628

10

Ibid. 1913, p. 458-503

11. . . . "Reorganization of the Public School",
 "The Journal of Education", 1911, Vol. 8, 1916, p. 186

9

and high school grades, and in order to relieve it there was a separate three year junior high school developed in several communities about the year of 1910. Up to this time the basic philosophy and practically all of the administrative and instructional features of the early junior high schools were largely the outgrowth of the recommendations of the various deliberative committees during two decades beginning with the Committee of 10.¹²

The first departmentalized teaching, elective courses, promotion of subjects, and homerooms with faculty advisers were the significant functional changes that came about in 1896 in grades seven and eight at Richmond, Indiana. Also, at this time the two grades were placed in a separate building.¹³

In 1910 in Berkley, California and in Columbus, Ohio there was established the first three year intermediate school called the "junior high school." Berkley lays claim to being the first community to introduce into the new type of school a modified program designed especially to meet the needs of youth in the early adolescent years. Due to the progress made by these two schools, they gained wide spread attention and served as models for many schools to be established after 1910.¹⁴

¹²

W. F. Gruhn and H. E. Douglass, The Modern Junior High School, (Harvard Press-1947), p. 492

¹³

Ibid.

¹⁴

W. F. Gruhn, The Junior High School Movement; (Harvard Press-1947), p. 492

Purposes and functions of the junior high. As early as 1920 Briggs clarified several purposes of the junior high which were: to continue a common integrating education, to satisfy the pupils immediate and future needs, to explore by means of materials the interests, aptitudes, and capacities of pupils, and to reveal to pupils the possibilities in the major fields of learning.¹⁵

In 1925 Smith made an analysis of statements of purposes proposed by representative leaders in the movement. His three major purposes were: to provide suitable educational environment for children approximately twelve to sixteen years of age, to democratize the school system, and to effect economy of time in education.¹⁶

The Commission on the Curriculum of the Department of Superintendence in 1927 listed the purposes of the junior high from 1920-1927 by fifty-nine public school administrators and twenty college specialists. The purposes mentioned were: meeting individual differences in pupils, counseling and guidance, meeting the needs of the early adolescent group, bridging the gap between elementary and secondary schools, development of qualities of good citizenship, providing opportunity for profitable self-activity, and retention of pupils beyond compulsory school age.¹⁷

¹⁵

T. H. Briggs, The Junior High School, (Houghton 1920) p. 35.

¹⁶ J. A. Smith, The Junior High School, (Macmillan 1925) p. 108.

¹⁷ "The Junior High School Curriculum," Journal of Curriculum Studies, 1968, 1, 1-16.

The functions of the junior high school were largely administrative in the beginning, some of which were departmentalized teaching, elective courses, homogeneous grouping, promotion by subjects, and homeroom organization. There were other features which affected the instructional program such as opportunities for guidance, provision for individualized instruction, and earlier introduction of vocational studies and subjects such as algebra and foreign language.

In 1920, a survey made by Koos revealed that the junior high school had many functions. First of these was to realize a democratic school system through the retention of the pupils, economy of time, and recognition of individual differences. Second, recognizing the nature of the child at adolescence. Third, providing the conditions for better teaching. Fourth, improving the disciplinary situation and socializing opportunities, and the last function was to secure better scholarship.¹⁸

The most recent statement of functions were formulated by Gruhn and Douglass who submitted a tentative statement to a group of twelve specialists in secondary education for evaluation and criticism. These functions were: integration of learning experiences, exploration of pupil aptitudes, abilities and interests, guidance, individualization of instruction, socialization, and articulation of elementary with secondary education.¹⁹

¹⁸

L. V. Koos, The Junior High School, (Ginn 1927) p. 506

¹⁹

H. T. Gruhn and L. V. Douglass, The Modern Junior High School, (Hall Press 1947) p. 492

B. TRENDS OF TODAY'S JUNIOR HIGH

Curriculum and administrative trends. The required subjects in the seventh and eighth grades are usually English, mathematics, social studies, art, music, homemaking, and industrial arts. Health is required in some schools. These requirements will vary in the different localities.

In 1947 a study made by Gruhn and Douglass in scattered schools found that English was required in seventh, eighth, and ninth grades. Mathematics and social studies were required in seventh and eighth grades. As in the early schools, home-making and industrial arts were required in half or more of the schools in grades seven and eight but not required in grade nine.²⁰

Various studies reported by Gruhn and Douglass, on integration in curriculum reveal that in junior high schools there are numerous practices which contribute in this respect. The most common recent practices are fusion courses, combined courses, correlation between various subjects, and unit approaches to teaching. The studies cited do not show, however, that these practices lead to satisfactory integrated educational programs or to well-integrated learning outcomes.

Teachers were frequently restricted in meeting different needs of individual pupils by the prescriptions in the course of study. Recent tendency, however, is to give the teacher more and more freedom in this respect.

The common practices of the junior high school are: to prescribe minimum content with enrichment experience suggested, have different ability levels in courses of study, provide suggestions for adapting courses to pupils needs, and give teachers freedom to modify courses of study as they think best.²¹

In order to individualize instruction it is essential that teachers be familiar with different interests, abilities and backgrounds of their pupils. Gruhn's study shows that efforts are being made in some junior high schools to give teachers such information by providing mental test records, achievement records, records of vocational, educational, and emotional interests, and records of out-of-school backgrounds of pupils. The same study shows, however, that although such information is available in many schools, the records are usually kept in a central office rather than being kept placed in the hands of the teachers.²² Studies show that the junior high school curriculum is individualized by offering elective courses and curriculum, employing teaching methods that meet individual differences, providing special attention to gifted and to dull pupils, adapting courses of study to various interests and abilities of pupils and providing for remedial instruction.

²¹

Gruhn and Douglass, loc. cit.

²²

4. W. Gruhn, "An Investigation on the Relative Frequency of Particular and Related Practices Contributing to Realization of Basic Functions of Junior High School," Education Research, 1. 1. 1940, p. 123

In the administrative practices in junior high school there are changes in harmony with a newer point of view. For instance, subject matter achievement is receiving less emphasis in the criteria for marking. Homework is being reduced considerably.²³ There is a trend toward more informal disciplinary relationship.²⁴ A new type of pupil progress reports that are more descriptive of total growth are being introduced.²⁵ Such trends are now also found at other levels of education.

²³

R. Frederick and Isabel Jarvis, "A Survey of Junior High School," U.S. Office of Education. Bulletin 1928 No. 28, p. 79

²⁴

C. C. Davis, "Junior High School in North Central Association Territory, 1917-18", Sch. R. 26, 1918 p. 324-26

²⁵

H. H. Bartley, "Report Card Trends in the West," National Sch. 24; Nov. 1932, p. 51

General Courses, Exploratory Courses, and Guidance.

Ever since the earliest days of the junior high school movement, exploration has been regarded as one of the primary functions of the curriculum and exploratory courses of one sort or another have been available in numerous schools for many years. The exploratory emphasis in many of the so-called non-academic subjects has been apparent in the curriculum of a good many high schools. The idea is not new, although it is a particularly important feature in the general scheme of a functional curriculum.²⁶ However, the first mention made of exploration and guidance and the beginning of vocational education was in 1920 in the survey made by Koos which mentioned that these were a part of the function of realizing a democratic school system.²⁷

Koos and Kefauver made a canvass of guidance practices and found that in forty-six junior high schools that courses such as woodwork, cooking, and sewing are probably more nearly specialized than exploratory in character. The exploratory program has been closely associated with the practical arts and all courses in this large field are considered by some to be exploratory. It is in this field that most has been done to provide a variety of exploratory experiences which bring the pupil in contact with the fields of knowledge and

thereby represent significant exploratory opportunities.

Some of the other interpretation about exploratory

courses in junior high schools that came out of this study were:

- (1) the woodwork which predominates in seventh and eighth grades is a carryover from manual training offered in the elementary school;
- (2) the general shop was introduced into more than one-third of the schools and appears most frequently in the seventh grade;
- (3) the mechanical drawing appears over three grades in junior high school; and machine shop, sheet metal, auto mechanics,
- (4) electricity, and printing appear less frequently in the junior high schools
- (5) the commercial activities do not appear often in junior high school;
- (6) the typing and bookkeeping both appear in seventh and eighth grade of school.

Again in 1920 Briggs in clarifying the purposes of the junior high school mentions the fifth purpose is to start each pupil on the career which as a result of the exploratory courses, he, or the school, and the parents are convinced is most likely to be of a profit to the pupil.²⁸

In 1927 the eight purposes listed by the Commission in the Curriculum of the Department of Superintendence, included in the second purpose, prevocational training and exploration.²⁹

²⁸ L. V. Koos and Yefauver, Guidance in Sec. Schools, (McMillan Co. 1932) p. 122-124.

²⁹

Briggs, loc. cit.

³⁰

Curriculum of Superintendence, loc. cit.

Leaders in early phases of junior high school movement recognized the need for exploration in early adolescence. In this early movement it was proposed that a series of short courses in different areas of human activities for the purpose of giving pupils insights and providing a gauge of pupil performance in these areas. The failure to organize courses which touch all aspects of our culture and tendency to confine them to the practical arts have prevented the full fruition of the exploratory purpose. In a great many schools, the courses have been limited to courses in woodwork, automobile repairing, and metal work. A few schools have offered short exploratory courses in art and music. According to Kees and Kefauver, Bruner attempted in an Oklahoma school to offer "broadening and finding" courses in a large number of the areas of human experience which more nearly follows the original suggestions for exploratory courses. In the seventh grade, the pupils were given opportunities to choose short courses in art, auto-mechanics, cooking, electricity, expression, general shop, instrumental, writing, vocal music, vocational information, and woodwork. In addition to these, the eighth had arts, crafts, banking, brick-laying, and cement, biological science, business, carpentry, English, Latin, forging, sheet metal, general repairs, home nursing, interior decoration,

millinery, physical science, pre-modern language, printing, and public speaking. Bruner, after trying his plan for several years, found that there was little evidence to indicate that they were finding courses.³¹

It seems as though the exploratory courses may not have demonstrated their value but the idea of enriching pupils experiences in many aspects of life is sound. Most of the unfavorable results were due to many defects in the practical operation of the plan. In addition to the difficulty of offering a suitable variety of courses, weaknesses in administering the plan, and the attitudes of teachers, who consider the exploratory course as another course, in which the same standards of pupil performance should be expected, and pupils passed or failed as in other subjects, have served to prevent the courses from making their maximum contribution to exploration and pupil guidance.

Specialized courses should serve to explore further the capacities and interests of students and give to the student added information about the nature and value of the field of training. The fact that the course is specialized does not remove it from the exploratory service. It explores only a narrower field.³²

³¹

Koos and Kefauver, op. cit. p. 130-131

³²

Ibid. p. 119

The most satisfactory organization of special exploratory courses has been in the practical arts in which a pupil is given considerable freedom, under the guidance of the teacher, to transfer periodically from one aspect of the work to another.

The general courses offered in junior high which are general mathematics, general (or world) history, general language, and general science are designed to give the student the overview essential to study the more specialized field of study. These courses have certain exploratory values in that they present opportunities to ascertain pupil abilities and interests within a given area of study.

The exploratory values of the general courses have been questioned especially in the general language courses because such few lessons are presented with a very brief time devoted to each and the inappropriate training or lack of interest of the teacher. All of this results with confused thinking and superficial learning on the part of the students.

There have been suggestions made recently to abandon the exploratory concept altogether and to emphasize the orientation aspect of the general courses. On the other hand it has been proposed that specialized courses be studied first and then followed by general courses for the purpose of fusing and applying the knowledge acquired in the specialized courses.

Erroneous interpretations of the experience in exploratory courses are easily made. In these courses students

of low ability are often working with students of high ability. Students inevitably rate their ability in relation to the ability of other students in the class. Students of less ability may consider that they lack ability because they are unable to compete successfully with their superior classmates. The more capable students may not enter the occupation, and consequently competition in the class may be much higher than that found in the occupation. Similarly, these students of less ability may not take the advanced specialized course in a field because of relatively low achievement in the exploratory course.³³

Exploratory experiences are an important element in guidance. Through experiences in the elementary courses in the subject fields, whether they are organized as general or as exploratory courses, students may be led to discover the nature of the work in the more advanced and specialized courses. In addition, they can ascertain their capacities to succeed in each type of work, and to the extent to which they will enjoy it. At each step up the educational ladder, students should be encouraged to consider their successes and failures from the standpoint of planning subsequent programs more intelligently. We need more systematic appraisal of courses organized specifically for purposes of exploration. The achievement of students in such courses should be interpreted with care, and

³³

Ibid. p. 133

efforts should be made to present courses actually representative of the field explored, both in nature and in difficulty.³⁴

Throughout the seventh and eighth grades, there should be available enrichment or exploratory opportunities, in all of the arts; fine, industrial, and practical arts. This would involve the provision of general shop in which all pupils may have a variety of experiences with the techniques and industrial processes involved in the modification of materials--wood, metal, textile, etc., also the provision of general workrooms in which pupils may have a variety of experiences with the graphic and plastic arts--printing, drawing, painting, modeling, ceramics, etc. as well as with the dramatic and musical arts.

In organizing the work of the various exploratory courses both of the two extremes need to be avoided. One extreme is found in courses organized and taught as if their purposes were to train specialists and technicians. In such courses, there is often too meticulous insistence on high standards of work, fulfillment of every assignment to the letter, and the completion of a specified number of projects carried out in prescribed fashion. The result often is that the activities degenerate into perfunctory and meaningless routine because the pupil strives mainly to complete the required work. Instead of enrichment there may be impoverishment and instead of exploration, there may be mere exposure because too much is being required.

Pupils obviously should be made acquainted with high standards—standards of individual trades and professions—and should be helped to realize and appreciate what hard work, concentration of effort, and even mental and spiritual anguish may be required to attain such standards. These standards may be brought to realization by the teacher, field trips, and through lay and professional people.

The other unfortunate extreme is that of allowing the exploratory courses to degenerate into superficiality, shoddiness, and aimless "messing around." This results when teachers take the view that the pupils should do just what they want to do when they want to do it; or the workmanship, scholarship, care and conservation on materials and equipment, effective use of available time, order and system in classroom, or workshop, should not be enforced lest this interfere with the pupils' creative capacity. Pupils do not always know what they want to do when they come to the classroom. It is the responsibility of teachers to make pupils acquainted with the kinds of things that can be done in the exploratory courses and to see that pupils have more than a mere onlooker experience. In the classroom, where work must be quite completely individualized, there needs to be a preliminary survey of the kinds of materials, tools, and equipment available. From a series of job sheets, simple projects to more involved and complicated ones, may be provided for each of several kinds of activities that can be appropriately selected. Thus, the pupil who wants to make something that does

not much care what, can be encouraged to begin with relatively simple kind of projects, working with each of several materials and then proceeding to more complicated problems devised by himself of suggested ideas on the job sheets. If the pupil has had preliminary experience then he should be asked to spend time working with materials and processes not already familiar to him. The emphasis in the arts should be on making things.

There needs to be related instruction which can be worthwhile through library books and pamphlets, motion picture projector, films and slides, and exhibits. Neither will this related instruction prove uninteresting in field trips taken to whatever is accessible in the community.

It is impossible for any one pupil to take all of the exploratory courses that might be available in a school of moderate size. To do such would result in a scattering of time and energy and little real acquaintances with any field would be obtained. Depending on the school resources but a pupil should spend at least one year in each of three or four kinds of exploratory courses. Not more than two such courses would ordinarily be taken at the same time. The exploratory courses should be kept flexible and adaptable to individual differences and should be placed at the particular age level. A number of the less able pupils usually spend their time more profitably in exploratory type of activities than in other kinds and should have access to such courses throughout their training.

Insofar as the resources of a school permit, the exploratory courses should continue to operate in the junior high school and as much as possible in the elementary level.

A pupil will know, as a result of exploratory courses, whether he has the ability to specialize. Every youth should pursue the general studies for a part of the time during the school attendance. Exploratory and special studies may be carried on simultaneously. The fact that a course is specialized does not remove it from the exploratory service. It explores only a narrower field.³⁵ Pupils with great natural gifts may not explore or specialize as early as the pupil of the lesser natural endowment. It may not be wise to continue exploration when the limits of an individual have been reached for there will develop in many cases a lack of interest, an increasing distaste for the thing the pupil might be doing and a possible failure for the course.

Since exploration and guidance are major functions of the junior high school the studies that bear on these functions should be examined. The studies on exploratory practices in the curriculum may be grouped as follows: exploration through general, survey, or try-out courses, exploration through courses other than those of the survey type, and teaching methods that encourage exploration.³⁵

Junior business training and general business are both survey courses with exploratory objectives and through a study made in 1932 on junior business, revealed that it was offered in one-third of the schools.³⁶ In 1947 the study made on general business showed that it was taught in forty percent of the junior high schools.³⁷

Of one half of the schools investigated by Ferris in 1925, vocational information was given in social studies, English, general science, or practical arts which proved that exploration and guidance was also achieved in courses other than those mentioned above.³⁸

In 1940 Gruhn found that sixty percent of the schools presented vocational information in social studies classes.

Much can be done to provide exploration and guidance experience by employing teaching methods which encourage such experiences. Gruhn in 1940 revealed that the following teaching procedures were employed for exploratory purposes: individualized assignments, project method, interviews and talks with professional, business, and labor people, written and oral projects, wide variety of readings for optional work in English classes and extensive work in the library.³⁹

36

H. K. Loomis, F. S. Lile, R. L. Johnson, "The Program of Studies in Jr. and Sr. High," Nat'l Survey of Sec. Educ., Monograph No. 6, U. S. Office of Educ., Bulletin 1932, No. 17, p. 340

37

Gruhn and Douglass, op. cit. p. 492

38

E. N. Ferris, "Rural Jr. High", U. S. Office of Educ., Bulletin 1928, No. 28, p. 79

39

Gruhn and Douglass, loc. cit.

The courses and general information mentioned in the preceeding content is evidence that exploration and guidance are provided quite extensively in the curriculum of the junior high school particularly through survey courses, English, and social studies, and appropriate classroom methods and procedures.

Exploratory work in homemaking courses. Homemaking is not called exploratory. The statement of aims by the Committee on Home Economics working with the Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education did not make specific reference to exploration. The statement concerning pre-vocational training, "to give pre-vocational training to such girls as may discover within themselves special ability for those occupations and industries that have evolved from the house hold crafts," infers that the girls will discover special ability probably as the result of their contacts with these courses.¹⁰

The work proposed by this committee in 1938 for grades seven and eight adheres to the specialized phases of the field, like cooking and sewing. The ninth grade work was to be elective.

Too often girls conceive homemaking as limited to cooking and sewing and have little knowledge of the scope of the field or the wide variety of related occupations. General survey units should be introduced in early junior high that will give this knowledge. Subsequent and more specialized courses will then be selected more intelligently.

There should be homemaking laboratories which would provide boys as well as girls with experience in the processes and activities essential to good homemaking such as cooking, sewing, entertaining, interior

decoration, maintenance and operation of household equipment.

Homemaking is an important but not exclusive concern of the general studies. There is a frequent need for first hand experience in a good many aspects of home, and family life that cannot be provided the student unless there is some suitable space, equipment, and facilities.

The trend in the junior high curriculum has been to plan a broad home economics program, each year consisting of a series of units or experiences to give the pupil an understanding and appreciation of her own personal development and her own relation, as a helper, in the home and family group.

Typical junior high school areas of pupil experience or units are the Attractive-Health Girl; Helping With My Fall Clothes; Good Nutrition and Helping With Family Suppers; Assisting With and Guiding the Play of Little Children; Helping Others Enjoy Christmas; and My Part in Living With My Family and Friends. Another suggestion for a year's course of homemaking in junior high school might include units in Nutrition and Health, Personal Care, Making Friends, Suppers or Luncheons, Room Arrangement, Safety in the Home, Care of Younger Children, and Selection, Construction, and Care of Clothing.

41

F. R. Douglass, High School Curriculum, (Donald Press, N. Y. 1947) ; . 516 and 519

CHAPTER III

SURVEY OF JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

A. REPORT ON SURVEY I

Since this was my first experience with the teaching of exploratory homemaking courses, I wanted very much to inform myself as to what other schools in Illinois were doing with these courses, so I selected twenty schools, prepared a questionnaire,* along with a letter, and sent it to the principal of each school for his approval, asking that it be forwarded to and filled out by the homemaking teacher. Possibly due to this questionnaire being mailed in December, only seven schools out of the twenty responded.

The following junior high schools were mailed questionnaires. Those marked * responded.

Altamont	Ft. Vernor
Casey	Keoga
Champaign	Clney
Charleston	Petersburg
*Decatur (Woodrow Wilson)	*Peoria (Roosevelt)
Hillingham	Robinson
Lawrenceville (Lincoln)	Shelbyville
Marion	Urbana (Thornburn)
*Marshall	Villa Grove
St. James	Wentzville

QUESTIONNAIRE MAILED TO JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

1. Does your junior high school offer exploratory courses such as industrial arts and homemaking?
2. How do you feel about exploratory courses in homemaking?
3. Should exploratory courses be required or elective? Give reason for your idea on this.
4. How long have you had exploratory courses in your school?
5. Were your exploratory courses set up as a result of a supervisor or by community demand?
6. Do you have any community objections to courses being required?
7. If exploratory courses are elective, do you feel that they are being used by the pupil as an escape course? Do you approve or object to this?
8. How does your exploratory courses effect the future prospects for continuing training along the same line when entering high school?
9. Is there any state supervision of your exploratory courses in homemaking? What is your reaction to state supervision at this level?

Note to the homemaking teacher:

If you have a copy of your homemaking course of study available, I would appreciate having one returned with this questionnaire.

Two schools reported that they did not have a junior high school in their system and the five others all reported that they offer exploratory courses in homemaking. Four of these teachers said that they felt that exploratory homemaking should be required of all junior high school girls while one said that this would depend entirely on the remainder of the school program. The teachers did not all agree on the courses becoming an escape course at this level if an elective course. They stated at this age level the pupils do not always know what is best for them and if used as an elective there is a tendency on the part of the pupils to take homemaking as an escape course to avoid taking other subjects. Besides there is a slight tendency on the part of administrations to place in the homemaking courses, pupils that can not pass in other subjects. Requiring exploratory homemaking of all junior high school girls will eliminate such courses from becoming escape courses.

One school has had exploratory courses for eight years, one school has had them for three years, and two schools for the past four years. One teacher did not know how the school's program was started, another just said "it was the policy of the school," and the remainder stated that they were influenced by the state supervisor. Two of the teachers stated that they did not have any state supervision of exploratory homemaking at the present time while two stated that they did have supervision,

and one teacher said that their program is under the supervision of a local curriculum committee composed of representatives from the building. All of the teachers but one reported that there was no objection in the community about requiring homemaking in the junior high school. One teacher stated that her community objected some at first but there is none at the present.

All of the five teachers feel that exploratory homemaking is very helpful to pupils of this age group, particularly in helping the pupils to make a decision as to homemaking as a future profession or a career as a homemaker in her own home.

Two teachers stated that exploratory courses create considerable interest for homemaking in the high school. One stated that her school plans its program with the high school to avoid overlapping of subject matter. One stated that her exploratory homemaking encourages the pupils to want to take homemaking in high school while another teacher said that their exploratory courses had no influence upon the pupils taking homemaking in high school.

One teacher did not have a syllabus of any kind and one other teacher said that a syllabus could not be sent without the consent of the school office. Only two outlines were sent along with the returning of the questionnaires. I had hoped for several in order to gain ideas for enriching our own program.

The exploratory homemaking program at Mattoon has only been in existence six years. The exploratory program outline being used as a guide at the present is one planned by a homemaking teacher in our system with the recommendation of the vocational education director. We are visited occasionally by the state homemaking supervisor even though we are not considered a part of the vocational high school program. Our seventh and eighth grade pupils are required to take homemaking and the majority of them at this age level, like it very much. Out of an enrollment of three hundred each year about one-third to one-half of the girls continue homemaking in ninth grade. This information is based on the number who sign on the register at open house for the homemaking pupils. Of those who do take it, a large percentage are not the more highly qualified pupils. In other words high school homemaking at Mattoon seems to attract girls of lesser scholastic ability and those who feel that they are not capable of going into some other field of work. Due to these conditions and existing situations, I decided to prepare a questionnaire to go to my former homemaking pupils to help determine what the difficulty might be, to help enlighten the homemaking teachers in our system, and to help improve our own junior high school exploratory program.

B. REPORT OF FORMER HOMEMAKING PUPILS

There was no definite order for selecting the ninth grade pupils to participate in filling out the questionnaire; they were chosen at random. Questionnaires were sent to fifty-one ninth grade girls and thirty-one to the girls in the sophomore, junior, and senior years of school who were formerly my pupils. Thirty-four questionnaires were returned. It was learned that several of the former pupils had dropped out of school. The remainder of the questionnaires were not returned. A sample questionnaire is shown on the next page.

The following helpful suggestions were gained through the information gathered on the questionnaires.

The pupils were asked to state what part of their exploratory homemaking courses taken in junior high school had been the most helpful to them in high school. In general there were a variety of answers from the thirty-three pupils. They said that putting in liners, sleeves, attaching collars, learning to use patterns, learning to operate the sewing machines, and staystitching had proven to be the most helpful to them in their ninth grade work.

Two pupils suggested having home projects included. Some would like more study on textiles and color and some wanted more experiences with patterns. They also wanted an opportunity to counsel on personal problems.

A few of the pupils wanted to have homemaking every day instead of twice each week. They also suggested that, if possible, to have a student teacher (like the high school) to assist in the work. They also suggested that the school should have a home making club.

QUESTIONNAIRE GIVEN TO FORMER PUPILS

Dear _____

I am making a little study of the junior high-exploratory homemaking courses. Since you were a former pupil, I feel that you are in position to be of great help to me in this study. I would appreciate it greatly if you would do this questionnaire quietly and confidentially and then return the same to the girl who gave it to you.

Sincerely yours,
Frances Guy

1. What part of your junior high homemaking is helping you most in your 9th, 10th, or 11th grade work?
2. What would you like to see added to the courses in junior high?
3. Have you any suggestions for improving the courses or the working conditions?
4. If you formulated an opinion in junior high about homemaking, has your opinion changed? Why?
5. Do you think that in junior high homemaking is the proper place and grade level to learn about homemaking careers? Would it be best to include this only in the high school? Give reasons for your answers.
6. Do you feel that junior high homemaking should be required or elective? Why?
7. Is the work offered in junior high practical enough and sufficient so that you are able to apply it at this point or use it for further study?
8. Any further suggestions or remarks about improving the junior high exploratory homemaking courses would be greatly appreciated and confidential. Use space below or on back of page for any other suggestions.

construction problems. Almost all of them mentioned having more and newer equipment.

The question was asked as to whether their attitude had changed toward the junior high school exploratory homemaking after they had an opportunity to experience homemaking in high school. Thirty-one of the pupils said that they liked what they had very much and that it should not be changed. Two stated that they didn't like it at first but like it very much now. All thirty-three of them said that it should be required of all girls. They stated that they could not see the reasons for doing some of the things such as staystitching at the time, but now they are glad that they did it for it helped them very much.

The opinion was unanimous in that more should be done about careers in homemaking in the exploratory homemaking courses.

The pupils were asked if they had enough homemaking in junior high school to enable them to work alone in their own homes or as a background for continuing in the field. Thirty pupils stated that they had enough junior high homemaking to help them without having to depend upon someone else entirely. Two said that everything they had in their seventh and eighth grades of homemaking has become useful. One felt that more study from the textbook would be helpful.

Very few pupils had any further comments and those who made comments had only complimentary remarks to make.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. SUMMARY

The summary is based upon the findings taken from both questionnaires, the one sent to the homemaking teachers and the one sent to the former pupils, concerning the junior high exploratory courses in homemaking.

- (1) Many of the more capable pupils with homemaking ability are not taking homemaking in high school at Mattoon.
- (2) There is a definite need in the junior high homemaking for counseling on individual problems and educational guidance.
- (3) The exploratory homemaking program is a good outlet for girls to enrich their own experiences.
- (4) The girls have an opportunity at an early age to explore the field for themselves which is the motive for offering this type of work.
- (5) A good exploratory program must include many teaching devices such as exhibits, movies, slides, library books, pamphlets, and field trips.
- (6) Exploratory courses should be flexible and adaptable to individual differences and should not be graded at any particular age level.
- (7) Exploratory courses are more generally associated with junior high schools and are recommended. In high schools the homemaking

more specialized. Many times the high school homemaking classes become "escape" courses for those that do not fit into other fields of training.

(8) It is difficult to get the idea established that exploratory homemaking is more than just cooking and sewing.

(9) Instructions in junior high homemaking should be individualized as much as possible.

(10) The Mattoon Junior High exploratory homemaking program is not as enriched as it could be.

B. CONCLUSIONS

It is evident that exploratory homemaking has not been in most junior high schools very many years.

From studying the programs of other schools, I find that clothing construction usually does not begin until in the eighth grade in most cases. In our school in Mattoon the classes want construction work in the seventh grade and since the parents do not object, then there would be no reason for not permitting the pupils to have it. Since each girl works on her own level, the type of construction to be done would be entirely optional and within her ability and based on her past experiences.

There is definitely a gap between junior high homemaking and the ninth grade homemaking at Mattoon and in some phases of the work there is overlapping of subject matter which brings about a repetition of educational information and activities.

Exploratory courses are not for the purpose of developing specialists in the field but to help each girl to enrich her own experiences as much as possible.

The homemaking teachers in our system definitely have a big task ahead of them. There is a need to study Mattoon conditions, pupil needs and other junior high school homemaking programs and then do something about our own. We need to have more meetings and a close working together to eliminate all overlapping of subject matter. We must determine our needs for our teaching in our junior high school to be able to do it on

accompany them to and through high school. There must be something that we could do to broaden our own program to include "tryout courses" other than the home project idea and then job placement for those that cannot continue to college. There should be some type of follow-up on our pupils for a period of time after they leave high school.

C. RECOMMENDATIONS

As an outgrowth of my reading and analysis of the questionnaires I would recommend:

- (1) That we have state supervision in order to improve our program.
- (2) That it would be helpful if each pupil could have a little more than two hours per week of exploratory homemaking. If this is not possible then another idea is to sell the board of education on the idea of the services of a student teacher, so that each girl could have more help with her problems.
- (3) That some discussion and consideration be given to the subject of home projects at this level. The pupils have expressed their desire to do home projects.
- (4) That individual records of the pupils be started in the seventh grade which will accompany them through the eighth grade and on into high school. This could be a short case history, a progress report, and suggestions for helping the girl to help herself.
- (5) That the present program be carefully scrutinized, evaluated, and revamped.
- (6) That more be done toward selling homemaking to the pupils so that more pupils will go into the field of homemaking.

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APPENDIX

LIST OF WORKS BY THE AUTHOR (Political)

The following article "British North America
and the American People" appeared in the
"The New York Times", January 10, 1911, and
in the "The New York Times", January 11, 1911.
The author was a member of the committee
appointed by the American people to write
the "The New York Times", January 11, 1911, and
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Junior High Homemakers Explore Numerous Fields

By FRANCES GUY

Seventh and eighth grade homemaking is exploratory in that each girl has opportunity to explore a field to decide whether to continue studies toward a career or become a homemaker.

Girls from Hawthorne, Longfellow, and Lowell schools report twice a week for class in Junior High homemaking. There are nine sections, a total of eighteen classes a week, for each teacher. Counting travel time by bus or foot to the Lowell building, actual working time ranges from an hour to an hour and fifteen minutes.

For several years approximately three hundred girls have reported for the classes. Half study and prepare foods while the other girls study clothing and construct garments. Each semester the groups change from foods to clothing, or vice versa.

In the seventh grade clothing section approximately two weeks is spent on the care of the bed room and four weeks on personal grooming. The remaining time is given to clothing construction.

Each girl learns to thread and operate a sewing machine. After this, she constructs a drawstring apron and a skirt.

Many techniques learned in making the apron are used in making the skirt. Each girl consults her mother, then selects material for both projects. She will work with cotton material.

She has a choice of the type of skirt in relation to her needs, size, ability, etc. There is usually an assortment of choices including gathered, circular, four-gore, square dance and tiered or "squaw" skirts.

Usually during the semester each girl does an extra project—such as a luncheon set of Romona cloth, pillow cases, laundry bags, dresser

scarfs, children's garments, etc.

Many girls do extra garments such as extra skirts, blouses, and shorts and halters. Each pupil may make as many garments as time and ability allows. Seventh grade girls will make approximately eighty aprons and one hundred skirts this semester. The extra garments will vary in number.

Clothing in eighth grade classes is more advanced. Each girl learns to measure for her pattern. A field trip is made to the store to study textiles.

The groups are then taught how to determine the amount to buy according to sizes, garment and width of material. Then comes the pinning of the pattern together for a fitting and alterations. Each girl shapes her material and readies her pattern for her layout.

After the layout is approved she cuts out her pattern parts, marks with a tracing wheel and carbon paper, staystitches, sews in darts and tucks and then follows a procedure, taken from the guide sheet, for putting her garment together.

While the groups make garments they also study colors and colors suitable for them, line and design and how it affects individuals, and textiles. In the study of textiles they learn to identify some of the standard and modern textiles.

The girls are not limited as to the number of garments, but they are required to construct practical and simple garments. These groups construct approximately one hundred and fifty garments during the semester.

In past years the groups chose whatever they wanted to make for their first project. But this semester a basic dress was tried using a pattern unfamiliar to most of them. This reviewed techniques already learned and supplied new learning processes. Each girl chose her own

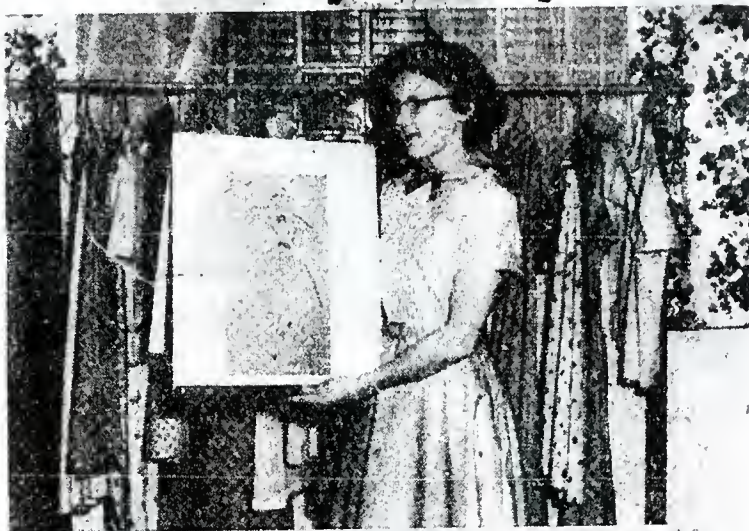
material, trimming, and other features to individualize her garment.

Beside the required project many have made extra projects such as sun-dresses, shorts, housecoats, "swing" skirts, blouses, jumpers, and party dresses of organdy to be worn to their "graduation day" party.

THE DAILY JOURNAL-GAZETTE

TUESDAY MAY 4, 1954

Junior High Homemaking



Making clothing is an involved process studied in detail by seventh and eighth grade girls. In the top photo Marilyn Homann holds a chart showing the basic dress made by eighth grade groups this semester. She is wearing a similar dress. In the middle picture, left to right, Shirley Livesay, Joyce French and Karen Letner model basic dresses. Beverly Andrews is shown at work at the sewing machine in the lower photo. She is making a pair of plaid denim shorts.



An eighth grade girl modeling her basic dress and holding the chart showing the basic dress.



The three eighth grade girls are modeling their basic dresses. These garments were individualized by choice of material, pockets, belts, trims, and collars and cuffs.



A girl is shown sewing a dress. The dress is made of a light-colored material and has a simple design.



A group of eighth grade girls looking over a finished garment. They are wearing their basic dress just like the one that they are viewing.



The eighth grade girl on the left has on a sixteen gore skirt and the one on the right a sun dress which were made by them.



An eighth grade clothing class at work in their classroom.



Seventh grade drawstring aprons.
Their first sewing project.



Skirts made by seventh grade girls--
gathered, circular, four-gore.



Three square dance skirts made in
the seventh grade classes.



The sewing trailers viewing board
in class room.

